

INCOMING TELEGRAM

Department of State

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Action

Control:

6174

Rec'd:

November 16, 1962
10:30 p.m.

SS

Info

FROM: New York

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 1834, November 16, 8 p.m.

ACTION DEPARTMENT 1834; INFORMATION CARACAS 13

DEPARTMENT PASS WHITE HOUSE

LIMIT DISTRIBUTION S/S

Cuba

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Authority State Sec 7/25/77

By M/g, NARS, Date 8/16/77

Stevenson had hour-long conversation with Venezuelan Foreign Minister Falcon Briceno at latter's request. Stevenson reviewed for information of President Betancourt, since Falcon soon to return to Venezuela, status negotiations with USSR. Said that while we approaching agreement with USSR, difficult problems remain; specifically, removal of IL-28s, verification and a plan for future safeguards against reintroduction of offensive weapons. Stevenson ventured personal opinion that USSR would remove bombers if US guarantee were forthcoming.

Recalling terms of "guarantee" offer in President Kennedy's letter, and particularly the letter's expression of confidence that "other" Latin America's might do likewise, Stevenson asked whether Venezuela would give a guarantee in some form. Dr. Falcon, while agreeing that aggression "is against the law" and against the charters of the UN and the OAS, said that "Venezuela would never give its guarantee not to invade." While he dismissed as idle any possibility of an invasion by Venezuela, in view of Cuba's superior strength, he still resisted the idea of any formal guarantee.

Falcon then

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-2- 1834, November 16, 8 p.m., from New York

Falcon then said that a settlement with the USSR, which he understood is all the US is seeking at the moment, would still deal with only a part of the problem. Castro would remain, he said, and Castro will not change. Cuba, as long as Castro remains, will always be a "center of perturbation." He recounted Venezuela's difficulties with political penetration and subversion and said if he were a US citizen, he would be "very careful" about giving any guarantee because this "would be a victory for Castro."

Stevenson again reiterated that the US/USSR negotiations seek only to terminate the immediate problem created by the missiles; that we are not dealing with the longer-range problem in spite of USSR efforts to inject Castro's five points; and, that the guarantee we are committed to give upon full compliance by the USSR would only restore the status quo ante. This would involve no more commitment by us than the normal requirements of international law, the UN Charters, et cetera. When Stevenson asked whether repeal of the OAS Resolution of October 23 could, in effect, constitute a sufficient Latin American guarantee since this would restore the status quo ante, Falcon responded by citing the usefulness of the October 23 Resolution. Venezuela, he said, would not approve a "unilateral" invasion of Cuba by the US. This would be contrary to principle. But the existing resolution sanctions "individual and collective" action, he said, and any action taken pursuant to it could not, therefore, be "unilateral." Asked directly whether Latin America would support an invasion of Cuba, Falcon replied that "at least 13 countries would".

In response to Falcon's question, Stevenson said US overflights would continue, especially at high altitude as long as necessary for our security.

As an interesting sidelight, Falcon mentioned an incident
which

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-3- 1834, November 16, 8 p.m., from New York

which occurred during OAS consideration of the Venezuela/Dominican Republic issue. Carlos Lechuga, then Cuba's Ambassador to the OAS, had called on Falcon together with Perez Cisneros after receipt of instructions from Castro which were described as equivocal and unclear. Lechuga, Falcon said, had told him that if Castro's orders were against support of Venezuela he, Lechuga, would resign. At that time at least, Falcon said, Lechuga was probably not a Communist.

STEVENSON

JVC

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